

ABSTRACT

5 A method of image compression includes significance switching of DCT
coefficients in block-based embedded DCT procedures. Bitwise digitized DCT
coefficients are passed through successive significance sweeps of the whole
image from the most significant down to the least significant coefficient bit
planes. With each new sweep, newly significant coefficients may appear
10 within a block, and block-masking is used to transmit the addresses of those
newly significant coefficients. An off-mask may also be used. The invention
further relates to a hardware or software-based image encoder.

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